

always found the birds wherever a fresh-water lagoon existed, and I do not think there is any doubt that the bird is general both on the Andaman and Cocos Islands, where the above condition exists.

N. F. WILSON,
Commander, R.I.M.S. "Canning."

BOMBAY, 3rd October 1903.

[NOTE.—Further information regarding the distribution of this duck is most useful, as few persons have had an opportunity of observing it. An interesting note on its habits, &c., was contributed to our Journal by Mr. A. L. Butler and is quoted by Mr. E. C. Stuart Baker under the heading of this species in his paper on "The Indian Ducks and their Allies" (Vol. XII., p. 259), where he also refers to a specimen that was shot at Bassein, Burma, the skin of which was identified by Mr. F. Finn, it having probably been driven there during some storm, having ventured too far out to sea from the Andamans.

E. COMBER, F.Z.S.,
Honorary Secretary, Bird Department,
Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.]

No. XIII.—ON THE PENIS OF RUSSELL'S VIPER.

In a paper I wrote on the snakes of China, Japan, and the Loo Choo Islands^{*} I remarked on the bifid character of the copulatory organ of a small viper (*Ancistrodon blomhoffii*). I do not know whether the peculiarity has been observed before, but I can find no allusion to it in my snake literature. To-day I had brought me a large (3'-7") male Russell's viper (*Vipera Russellii*) killed last night. On investigating the genitals I found a precisely similar condition. Each penis (for snakes, like lizards, are doubly endowed) is subdivided, the main stem, when the organ is protruded, being about half an inch in length. I send you the specimens dissected out. The organ of one side is invaginated as it would be during the act of coition. I have never observed this peculiarity in other snakes. Is it a viperine characteristic?

F. WALL, CAPTAIN, I.M.S.

CANNANORE, 1st December 1903.

No. XIV.—NOTE ON YOUNG FISHING CAT (*FELIS VIVERRINA*).

On Sunday, the 8th November, whilst out snipe shooting near here, I discovered a kitten of the fishing cat (*Felis viverrina*) in its native home. The lair was placed close to a tidal backwater of the river, on the ground among reeds about two feet high, and consisted of a small beaten-down patch where mother and offspring had evidently been in the habit of nestling together. From this proceeded, in two opposite directions, very distinct beaten-down paths, reminding one of hare runs on down lands in England.

* Which appeared in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, February 1903.